

'ridden roughshod' (p. 190) over category distinctions by smuggling in Humean rather than Aristotelian assumptions (p. 116). Marx is also shown in the final chapter to have understood and built upon Aristotle in *Capital* and much of the standard criticism of Marx is seen to rest upon an often unargued choice in favour of Humean rather than Aristotelian metaphysics. In short this is an important and fascinating book that should be read well beyond the natural audience in classics and Aristotelian studies. For Meikle has shown us an Aristotle with much to teach us about our "free market" world.

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THE ELDERS by R. Alastair Campbell, *T & T Clark* 1994. Pp. xiv + 309
PAUL IN HIS HELLENISTIC CONTEXT Edited by Troels Engberg-Pedersen *T & T Clark*. 1994. Pp. Xxvi + 341
THE DOUBLE MESSAGE by Turid Karlsen Seim *T & T Clark* 1994. Pp. x + 301

New Testament studies has its roots in theology much more than in classical studies, even though many biblical scholars up until recent years were classically educated. One result of this was a tendency to treat the documents of the New Testament as being quite separate from the classical world in which they were written. There was always an awareness that the actual figures of the New Testament had some relationship to the outside world but this was the historical figures as reconstructed by scholars. The actual documents were interpreted as being disconnected from this wider Hellenistic world. In recent years, that has changed. *T & T Clark's* series, 'Studies of the New Testament and its World', three of whose volumes I wish to review show evidence of this. Although the title of the series might suggest a series of books on social history or archaeology, the books in the series contain a great deal about the nature of the texts treated as typical forms of writing which could be found in the ancient world, both pagan and Jewish..

Alastair Campbell's *The Elders* tries to re-examine the nature of 'the elders' in the New Testament. We are given useful surveys of the use of this phrase in the Old Testament, the deuterocanonical writings, Aristeas and Josephus, in Graeco-Roman society, in the letters of St Paul and in the Acts. Finally there is an examination of the topic in the Apostolic Fathers. Although Campbell is trying to examine the nature of the role of the elders in the early church, in effect what we have is a study of the use of the phrase in documents which are regarded as being in a natural progression. Campbell sees the elders as a being "more a way of speaking about leaders than an office of leadership itself" (Pg. 140). His problem which he doesn't do a lot to solve is the use of elder in the singular as in Peter's fellow elder, (1 Peter 5:1) and the term 'the elder' in the introductory verses of 1 and 2 John. In these cases, 'elder' does seem to refer to a particular office.

Paul in his Hellenistic context is a collection of articles based on a conference on Paul and his Hellenistic background held in Copenhagen in 1991 which taken individually are more convincing than when seen

together as here. If we accepted the arguments of all these articles, we would have Paul as someone who managed to encapsulate in himself just about every strand of thought and behaviour known to us from the Hellenistic world. We have articles on Paul and stoicism (Engberg-Pedersen), Paul as rhetorician (Stowers and Hellholm), Paul as member of a Hellenistic school (Alexander), a Paul who is preoccupied with honour, though negatively, as seen in terms of the Greek polis (Moxnes) and a Paul who is assimilated to Cynic thought in his attitude to free will (Malherbe). This a crude version of what the articles actually say. Paul is seen as someone whose language is reminiscent of these different types of thought and ways of life, but none of the writers go so far as to identify him with one particular school of Hellenistic philosophy. Paul is a spermologos for one writer, Engberg-Pedersen, as in Acts 17: 18, someone who picked up scraps of knowledge from wherever he could. This is moderate and acceptable yet for all the remarkable illuminations which these approaches give us, Paul is in danger of getting lost in the increasingly complex cats-cradle of conflicting Hellenistic and Jewish schools in which recent scholarship has placed him. Quite how Paul placed himself among all the possible ways of thinking, speaking and living available in the ancient world is still to be established.

Turid Karlsen Seim in *The Double Message* sees the conflict between the wider Hellenistic world and the teaching of Christ as creating tensions in the writing of Luke, in his Gospel and the Acts in his attitude to women. Seim assembles evidence to show that the Gospel is favourable to women in a way that the Acts fails to be. There is a constant attempt to balance women against men both in its narrative and in its teaching. Mary is paralleled with Zechariah, Simeon with Anna, the men of Nineveh and the Queen of the south, and so on. The presence of women among the disciples is stressed much more in Luke than in the other gospels. Women are healed by Jesus with a view to service but the meaning of service is to be changed. Jesus is the one who is among them as one who serves, (22:27). The theme of virginity and widowhood has added significance for Seim as a way of showing that ordinary family relations are dismissed as irrelevant (Chapter 6), the ascetic mode of life which is open to women gives them a freedom from the family ties which otherwise would have controlled them. This criticism of marriage is admitted by Seim to be oriented towards the eschatological future but for her Luke tries to draw attention to how decisively important it is to live right in anticipation of the eschaton. Yet in the Acts, this new emphasis on women is in danger of being lost. Luke makes clear that the people in control, whether the apostles or the seven are without exception men. This is attributed to apologetic considerations but the double message is in the memories of women's role in relation to Jesus. This memory sets up an ironic relationship to the depiction of early church life, as it was lived against the background of the pagan world. The series as a whole shows that structuralist and reader response criticism hasn't completely ousted attempts to locate the New Testament against a wider world.

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